



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SOLDIER RECORD DATA CENTER
8899 EAST 56TH STREET
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46249-5301

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

AHRC-EB

23 October 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR Director of Military Personnel Management, Office of the
Deputy Chief of Staff G-1, 300 Army Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20310-0300

SUBJECT: Field After Action Report – FY07 MSG Selection Board

1. References.

a. DAPE-MPE-PD, Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) dated 3 October 2006, Subject: MOI for the FY07 MSG Selection Board.

b. U.S. Army Soldier Record Data Center (SRDC) FY06 MSG Selection Board Standard Operating Procedures effective 3 October 2006.

2. General. The FY07 MSG Selection Board convened at Soldier Record Data Center, Indianapolis, Indiana, on 3 October 2006 to select the best qualified noncommissioned officers for promotion to Master Sergeant (MSG) IAW references 1a and 1b above. The board also screened packets on Soldiers referred to it under the Stand-By Advisory Board (STAB) process.

3. Board issues and observations (items of interest to the field relating to the board process, procedures and personnel files).

a. Product (Soldier). There is a steady and positive upward trend in validated records over the last three years. In FY05 only 62% of eligible SFCs validated their records. That number increased to 76% in FY06. Eighty percent of promotion eligible SFCs validated their records for the FY07 MSG Board. Kudos to SRDC for championing this cause to the field, and kudos to the personnel apparatus, CSMs, SGMs, and leaders who got the word out to their NCOs to validate and update their records.

b. Performance and Potential. The board coincided with the launching of the "Army Strong" advertising campaign. The quality of our NCO Corps, as evidenced by the nearly 19,000 records reviewed, exemplify the essence of our Army's new motto – *an Army that's strong, resolute, value laden, and prepared to answer our Nation's call*. The board is confident the very best NCOs were selected for promotion. The board focused primarily on the NCOER to determine an NCOs overall performance and demonstrated potential for increased responsibility. Sustained and outstanding performance in tough, career

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enhancing positions were viewed as “potential” indicators and favorably considered in the evaluation process.

c. Utilization and Assignments. We build a better Army by developing multifunctional Soldiers with careers that span the full spectrum of jobs within a Career Management Field (CMF). A review of the more than 18,000 files revealed “the tough jobs” are no longer restricted to the MTOE “muddy boots” organizations. The Soldier’s selected by this board, in large measure, had diverse backgrounds which included tough MTOE jobs as well as demanding TDA assignments such as Drill Sergeant and Recruiter Duty. We noted NCOs who sought the tough and high-risk jobs tended to do so throughout their careers. Likewise, the board noted a similar tendency in NCOs within low-risk TDA assignments. In other words, NCOs tended to stick to what they knew. The board concluded a good balance of MTOE and TDA assignments develops more rounded and capable senior NCO our Army will require in the future. The board recognized a tendency for some NCOs to stay in a non-developmental job for three years—their tenure at a camp, post, or station. The board concluded that two developmental jobs within a tour might provide greater opportunity for growth within our NCO Corps. The board observed a large percentage of the considered population had OIF/OEF experience. Favorable consideration was given to those who consistently performed successfully in leadership positions.

d. Training and Education. The lion’s share of NCOs reviewed graduated of ANCOC and had college credit. A fair number of NCOs were well on their way towards obtaining Bachelor’s Degrees. A number of the viewed population had attended Battle Staff and the First Sergeants Course. Noncommissioned Officers who were Distinguished Graduates within NCOES courses tended to demonstrate that same level of excellence throughout their careers. Soldiers should be encouraged to take full advantage of the numerous educational opportunities available to them at present.

e. Physical Fitness. A significant number of NCOs had earned the Army Physical Fitness Badge (APFB) within the records reviewed. The photos revealed the appearance of a healthy and fit force. Conversely, photos and NCOERs depicted NCOs that significantly exceeded the prescribed height/weight standards – by more than 50 pounds in some cases – but passed body fat standards. Leaders must toe the AR 600-9 line, as very few NCOERs revealed a failure to meet height and weight standards.

f. Overall Career Management. The board agreed that overall CMFs are effectively managed. However, the board also agreed a better balance and greater diversity of MTOE/TDA assignments will build a stronger NCO Corps for the Army and the Nation.

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g. MOS Compatibility within CMF. Compatibility in all CMFs appears appropriate and healthy. This was the first board after the merger of 42A and 42L. The panel which assessed this group witnessed disparity within the two groups regarding tactical and technical skills. Time will rectify this disparity. Overall, however, NCOs within the zones of consideration have ample flexibility to gain the “rounding” assignments necessary to remain competitive with their peers for upward mobility.

h. Assignment and Promotion Opportunity. Each CMF provides excellent opportunities for success, but it requires initiative on the part of the individual. The board noted a need for assignment managers, CSMs, and SGMs to “right size” the length of tours in some non-MOS specific duties such as Equal Opportunity Advisor, Recruiter and Drill Sergeant duty. Whereas regulations may dictate length of time within the field, there should be more intensive management of personnel to ensure diversity of experience in this area.

i. Photos. Overall the photos were satisfactory, but there is significant room for improvement in this area. The board saw numerous violations of AR 670-1 such as faddish hairstyles, excessive length and faddish colors on fingernails, mustaches out of tolerance, and the improper wear and spacing of awards. Moreover, the board noticed of the improper fit of uniforms – jackets too long, too short, too tight, or too loose. The photo is generally one of the first items a board member reviews, thus this initial impression is very important. Of the considered population, 17,823 had photos--of which 15,768 were taken within the last three years. Two thousand fifty-five NCOs had photos older than three years, and almost 900 NCOs had no photo within their files. First and foremost, the board looked favorably on NCOs with a current photo. Missing photos in situations where there was ample opportunity to get an updated photo was used potentially as a discriminator, as were photos of NCOs still wearing the rank of SSG. The board recommends that Army G1 emphasize the five year requirement outlined in AR 640-30, to include “in current grade” to Commanders and Soldiers.

j. Total Person Concept. The NCO Corps is extremely strong and competitive. Noncommissioned Officers who achieved measurable excellence such as: induction into the Sergeant Audie Murphy or Sergeant Morales Club, recipients of Regimental Awards, repetitive leadership assignments, attendance at Battle Staff, and those exceeding NCOES course standards, had a competitive edge.

k. Rater. Justification of excellence is of the utmost importance. Excellence bullets must be clearly articulated, quantifiable and fully justified with

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specific examples of measurable results. Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reports with two or three "Excellence" ratings were viewed as very competitive by the board. Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reports with five "Excellence" ratings were extremely rare. Raters should put the strongest bullets first – they will stand out.

l. Disciplinary Action. Disciplinary action at the current grade was a significant discriminator in evaluating an NCO for promotion. Disciplinary actions should be reflected in the values and leadership potential ratings for that period—many times they are not.

m. Senior Rater. There was an abundance of "promote now, promote immediately, promote ahead of peers, a must select now," etc., comments provided by senior raters. In fact, the aforementioned comments proved the rule, vice the exception. Several panels witnessed these types of comments on reports that were blocked as "Fully Capable" by the rater. The board encourages senior raters to utilize quantitative and qualitative remarks in addressing performance and potential. Further, senior raters should reserve the strongest commentary for only the very best NCOs. Senior raters must ensure their comments are consistent with the numerical block checks for performance and potential.

n. Duty Description. The board ascertained that the duty positions on the NCOER and the positions on the Enlisted Record Brief (ERB) were inconsistent. Likewise, the board observed a lack of specificity within duty descriptions, as they did not quantify duties being performed, such as the number of personnel led, dollar amount and number of pieces of equipment, and size of organization supported.

o. Values. Any "no" on the values portion of the NCOER was viewed by the board as a significant discriminator.

p. Updating the OMPF. Eighty percent of the files for this year's MSG Board were validated – that's an 18% improvement over FY05's statistics. Nothing says "I care about my potential for promotion" to a board like a validated file and an updated photo. Soldier Record Data Center has done a yeoman's job in getting the word out, however, leaders at all levels must fight to capture the 20% who did not validate their records.

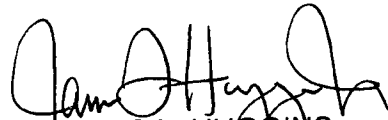
q. Online ERB comments to the board were read and considered. Soldiers who sent notes were credited with making an effort to update their files and for paying attention to the details of their record. The board is concerned

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with the large number of comments that expressing frustration or difficulty in using servicing personnel service battalions (S-1/PSB) to update their ERB. Finally, duty titles on NCOERs should mirror duty positions on the ERB.

5. Conclusion. The board absolutely believes it selected the best qualified Noncommissioned Officers for promotion. Chain of command involvement in all aspects of the promotion selection process (i.e. photographs, diverse assignment opportunities, justifiable and quantifiable comments, scope of responsibility in duty descriptions, updated ERBs, etc.) is essential. The NCOER is the cornerstone of the board's evaluation process. Raters, senior raters, and reviewers must send a clear and consistent message to the board of their individuals' contributions to the team, as well as their potential for increased responsibility. The quality of our NCO Corps validates our new motto, as they are definitely Army Strong! We should collectively endeavor to build a better Army by building versatile Soldiers.



JAMES L. HUGGINS
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President, FY07 MSG
Promotion Board